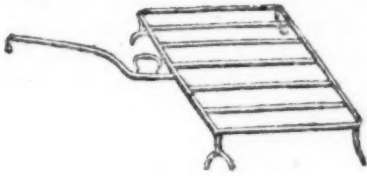


COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"It is not here a *military* blunder; but it is millions of people of property, millions of families, made to suffer from one erroneous word or stroke of the pen. Fail in any point of this sort; adopt any measure that shall extensively affect the community, let the effect be deeply mischievous, and at once, all the admiration of your generalship is swept away for ever, except amongst those who make no noise; away goes your name from the corners of the streets, and down comes your picture from the sign-posts."—*Register*, 23d February, 1829.

TO THE

DUKE OF WELLINGTON,

On the Grand Feast of the Gridiron.

Barn-Elm Farm, 7th October, 1829.

MY LORD DUKE,

THE motto to this letter is taken from one of the three LECTURES, which I addressed to you at your coming into office. You are pursuing an error of the sort there pointed out; and you may be assured that the prediction will be fulfilled; that is to say, if you persevere in your present course, and adopt not those concomitant measures which I have so often and so pressingly urged upon your attention. Unable to rouse you by any other means to a sense of the danger which is approaching your fame as a Minister, I now beg you to reflect on the effects of a holding of the GRAND FEAST OF THE GRIDIRON!

The event which is to justify the holding of this feast, is one of these: 1. Putting out small notes again; 2. Lowering the value of the coin; 3. Reducing the interest of the Debt; 4. A total blowing up of the system of funds and paper-money. And the ground of the feast is this, that, whereas the Scotch *feelosofers*, the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews,

Peter Macculloch, the writers and lecturers of the University of Oxford, have all *asserted*, that the Debt can continue to be paid in gold in full tale, and of full weight and fineness; and the Parliament has *enacted* that this shall be done, and without the aid of *small notes*; that, whereas, all these have thus asserted and thus enacted: I have asserted that it *cannot be*; and I have pledged myself, that if it be accomplished, I will consent to be *broiled alive on a gridiron*!

For just *ten long years* the various Ministers and Parliaments have been hard at work to make me a *false prophet*, or, as they have called it, a *fool*. In this same work *you are now engaged*. If you adhere to the small notes, and continue to pay the interest of the Debt in FULL; and this go on for a year after the first of February, 1830, and without producing a convulsion in the country, then I will yield my body to be broiled. But if on the contrary, *you put out small notes again*, under any shape, or under any pretence; if you lower the value of the coin; if you take from the interest of the Debt; if you produce a convulsion in the country: if you do any of these, then I hold the GRAND FEAST; and a feast it shall be! It shall be my compensation for all the affected contempt shown towards me by all the Ministers and all the Parliaments during the twenty years; and for all the attempts made by their understrappers to destroy me.

This struggle between me and all the pretended learned men of this kingdom; all those who called themselves statesmen; all those who have been possessed of power in the state; all the Members of Parliament, with the exception of the present LORD RADNOR, COLONEL JOHNSTONE, and Mr. JAMES, of Carlisle; all the three hundred newspapers, magazines, and reviews; all the lecturers on political economy: the struggle has been for now exactly twenty years; that is to say, from the time of forming the Bullion Committee, of which Horner was the chairman; the struggle has been between all these on one side and me on the other: I always contending that the Debt never could be paid in

full; that the interest of this Debt never could continue to be paid in full in a real gold currency; and they contending constantly for the contrary. This is notorious now to the whole nation; and it is nearly notorious to the whole world. During these twenty years, I have been with nearly the whole of these parties a pretty constant subject of abuse, or, at the very best, of ridicule. Therefore, when the event shall have completely decided in my favour, my triumph shall be, if I have life and health, as conspicuous, as notorious, as loudly and generally proclaimed as it is possible for any thing to be by the means of the press. There shall be publications of writings; there shall be pictures; there shall be medals; there shall be, if I have the means of obtaining it, and the means, please God, I shall have, a monument erected on a bit of freehold land, which I will pledge myself shall be better known and more resorted to than the three arches at Hyde Park Corner, which were intended to bear the names of what are called your three great victories; but which, circumstances have induced modestly to bear no name at all; and which is very curious, this wondrous modesty has been produced; this singular and amiable forbearance; this unexpected abstinence from boasting, has been produced by the very cause which is to give me my triumph. I will make a monument that shall bear its name, and that will not blush for its name. On one side it shall bear a representation of that culinary implement which is seen at the head of this Register, with the words under it, taken from Swift,

"Hated by fools, and fools to hate,
"Be this my motto and my fate."

At the bottom shall be the signature of "WILLIAM COBBETT." On another side shall be the original passage in which I pledge myself to be burned on the gridiron on certain conditions. On another shall be the history of the event, which will give me my triumph; and on the fourth side shall be an extract from a letter to the King (then Prince Regent) written in Long Island in 1819, in the following words, "There, may it please your Royal Highness, stand your Ministers and your Parliament; and here stand I. Time stands be-

"tween us, the palm in one hand and the foolscap in the other; and here we all are, waiting his award. Under this shall be written the date when, and the manner in which, the award has been made."

Now, my Lord Duke, this is far from being a joke on my part. If it were necessary, I would sell the shirt from my back rather than not do this thing. But there will be no necessity for any sacrifice on my part. There will be thousands upon thousands to contribute towards this monument. We shall need no ornament, no carved work, no embellishments of architecture: a plain column of the hardest and most durable of stones, and the writing cut deeply in brass will serve our purpose; and this I verily believe you will see completed before the month of May, 1831. And is not this justice? Is not this due to the man who has always been right upon this most vital of matters? I have no idea of nerves in a Minister or Parliament capable of setting at nought shame like this: it will be the most signal instance of shame that the world ever saw: it will be such an instance as men have never read of, and never dreamed of. What! all the learned men, or pretended learned men of a kingdom: all the Ministers and all the Parliaments, for twenty long years: all the writers of all sizes and in all shapes: all agreeing to pull down and utterly destroy, if possible, one single private individual because he maintained certain opinions; and, at last, proving themselves, and by their own acts, those opinions to be just and true; to entertain the idea of escaping exposure, and move along quietly without a word being said to expose their injustice or their folly: to imagine this is something so monstrous, as hardly to be credited of emanating from the minds of madmen.

Fain, indeed, would you all that the past were completely obliterated from the minds of the people. This cannot be, however: the struggle has been too long; the party you have been struggling against has been too able and too active: every man in the kingdom, who reads any thing at all, has read about this matter. Every one does not understand the subject; but every one knows that I have been opposed to you all,

and that you have all been opposed to me: no earthly power can disguise the fact of the struggle: and now you can take no one step of any sort; you can make no one effort of any description soever to draw the nation from the gulph of misery into which you have plunged it, without giving me my complete and ample triumph. Bank of England one-pound notes; a re-issue of the country one-pound notes; a lowering of the standard of the coin; a reduction of the interest of the debt; all work for me alike: you cannot move hand or foot without doing something to gratify me; and you cannot stand still without utter ruin to the nation. If I were to prefer my own triumph; if I were to wish that it should be as conspicuous as possible, though, at the expense of suffering which no pen can describe, I should say, "Push on your present measures till you have totally ruined all the proprietors in the kingdom, and destroyed every vestige of property"; because then I should have ninety-nine out of every hundred persons calling on me for forgiveness, and beseeching me to aid them in their distress. But I do not wish to see this: I wish to see the pinching go on a little further, before you be compelled to act upon my opinions.

We are at a very little distance from this point now. Scarcely a day passes without the destruction of some considerable, indeed, some great commercial establishment. Men who never dreamed of being poor any more than they dreamed of being turned into brutes, are daily becoming poor as their footmen or their porters. Men, one instance of which took place only last Saturday, who inherit commercial wealth, and name, and weight, from their fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers, are, under your sway, under your contempt of my opinions, swept away into poverty and disgrace, as we sweep flies from our tables or the backs of our horses. Children, sons and daughters, brought up with all the prospects of wealth to be enjoyed; thousands of these, not one of whom ever suspected, ever had a thought come into the mind, that even a diminution of wealth would be to be experienced, are pulled down at once, not only into the middle rank of life, but into the lowest of all. Hitherto

the suffering has been principally amongst those who labour for their bread. The heavy hand of taxation has gone on pressing class after class, but has enabled each class to shift it to the next below, till the labourer was pressed into starvation. Now, the oppression comes with light hand: it seizes the opulent at once, and destroys them; and London, the emporium of the wealth of the world; the undisputed mistress of the universe with regard to commerce and wealth; now contains more miserable merchants than all the rest of the world put together.

With the land it fares, if possible, still worse. Wretchedness is written on the face of every farmer in the country. Be his wealth what it may, his heart is sunk within him: he sees that he must soon lose that which he possesses; and the landowner himself, unless he have some thing besides his land, dreads that he shall become little better than the paupers upon his estate. I do not fear the charge of exaggeration here, because it is impossible for words fully to describe the thing. And, my Lord Duke, when it is clear; when it is visible to every eye, that this state of things has arisen out of acts of the Ministry and the Parliament; and when it is also notorious that these consequences were foreseen, foretold, foredescribed, in all their magnitude and all their detail; when this is well known to every man, can you imagine that there is no responsibility, no real efficient responsibility, resting upon the heads of that Ministry and that Parliament?

If I were to confine myself to men who may properly be called *merchants, great wholesale dealers, ship-owners, master manufacturers, great master builders*, and other great *tradesmen, farmers, and landowners*; if I were to confine myself to these, there are not less than five hundred thousand men, together with their families, who have now been plunged into a state of the greatest distress, or at least the greatest anxiety, from no cause in this world than the measures of the Government, including the Parliament. Measures, with regard to which these persons had no control; measures, of the effects of which they were not apprised; and against which effects no industry, no skill, no frugality, no pru-

dence, no forbearance of enjoyment, could possibly have guarded them. If the stroke of poverty and degradation had been dealt them from the sky, and with the swiftness of the thunderbolt, they could not have been less in a state to resist that stroke than they have now been to resist the stroke dealt them by the Government and the Parliament. Trade and agriculture are to submit to the dispensations of Providence; are to submit to the effects of bad seasons, and to the dangers of the seas. But the farmer provides against dispensations of this sort. Losses by fire, by floods, by blight, by drought, he counts upon; he makes them part of the calculation of his probable losses. The merchant and ship-owner is taught by the nature of his business, to provide for the adversity occasioned by the winds and the waves. The manufacturer, and all other men, make, in their calculations, allowances for risks naturally attendant upon their trade. Even the landowner, though he comes as near to certainty as a man can come, still has to count upon probable, or at least possible losses, from the inability of his tenants to pay; but here is a thing; here is a cause of ruin, absolutely inflicted *by law*: here is a stroke coming from the power that ought to give general protection; and a stroke, too, more destructive than the lightning's blaze, the inundation from rivers, or the swallowings of the sea. At once, without any forewarning, without a moment's notice, without the smallest indication of the approaching blow, the blow comes, and inflicts ruin not to be resisted by any human means.

I, indeed, have a right to say, and in my anger, in the days of ill treatment; or while that ill treatment was fresh in my mind, and the effects of it felt in my affairs; I have said, and with great truth, to persons who have suffered from these blows given by the Ministry and the Parliament, "You deserve your suffering; I have duly forewarned you; you ought to have believed me; be your ruin, therefore, upon your heads." I confess that I have anticipated this ruin with delight; but now that it is actually come it startles even me. You and your colleagues and the Parliament, however, can tell no ruined man that he was warned of his danger. The Ministry

and the Parliament have stricken the blow, and the wretched sufferers have had not the smallest means of resistance.

It may never have occurred to you, my Lord Duke, but it frequently has occurred to me, that the legislature has no *right*; has had, has not now, and cannot have, under this form of Government, any right to do that which has now been done with regard to the value of the money. LORD COKE says, that an Act of Parliament, if contrary to Magna Charta, and the common law, is made without right; and has no force. Now, Magna Charta and the common law will not sanction the taking of property from one man and giving it to another. No man will contend, that the legislature is endued with the power of taking away a man's estate, without an equivalent made him in due course of law. No man will contend, that an Act of Parliament could be pleaded, that should simply declare that it was expedient to take away the estate of A. B. No man will contend this; and what, short of this, is the measure that is now in a course of fulfilment? If the Small-note Bill, as it is called, had begun thus: "Whereas it is expedient to take away the property of all persons who pay taxes and who receive none; and whereas it is expedient to reduce the present land-proprietors to ruin by slow degrees; and whereas it is expedient that the same should take effect in a somewhat more summary manner with regard to merchants, ship-owners, traders, and manufacturers; be it therefore enacted, that all these persons shall pay three shillings in future instead of one shilling, which they paid before, to the fundholders, and other receivers of taxes:" if the Act had been in these very words, it could not have been more effectual for its purpose than it now is. It is an Act to confiscate (as the Birmingham petition very properly called it) the property of all those who do not receive taxes. If the Act had been passed in this form; if these horrible words had been placed before the eyes of the nation, the Act never could have passed; all men would have cried out against it; but, coming in the delusive form that it did come in, professing to give us a secure, instead of an insecure, money; professing to create

no inconvenience not easily overcome, professing, to be sure, to create an evil, if any at all, at most of very short duration, and to have in store lasting solidity and fixedness for the future: coming in this form, under this fair character and with these flattering professions, the Act was passed without opposition on the part of the people, by many of whom it was even received as a boon.

I doubt the right of the legislature to pass such an Act; but, at any rate, I have no doubt as to the terrible effects of such Act, unaccompanied, as it has been, with a reduction of the taxes; and I am very sure that it is utterly impossible that there should be any mitigation in its fatal consequences until something be done; until some other Act shall be passed in order to effect such mitigation. I have frequently endeavoured to show; and, indeed, I have shown, but I cannot show too often, the folly of expecting that *things will mend of themselves*. Yet, it is this very notion that has so often deluded the Ministry and the Parliament. They have thought that there would be no evil in duration longer than the time required to produce the change, which a changing of the value of money was to produce upon prices. This is an error of long standing with the Ministry and the Parliament. This error was adopted by Tierney in 1818, and it came into full use in 1819. BARING quoted HUME to show that the inconvenience or suffering would only last while we were passing from high prices to low prices; and that, when we arrived at the low prices, the suffering would be over. So it would have been, if the taxes had been lowered in proportion to the prices; but the taxes continuing the same in nominal amount, were in fact trebled in real amount by the change in the value of the money; and, therefore, when we arrived at the low prices, the suffering could not cease: it arrived at its highest pitch, to be sure; but there it had to continue. In the year 1822, it was shifted off for awhile; but now, after that shifting had dragged the nation through a *panic*, it has returned with double force. Prices must go on, on an average of seasons, getting lower and lower, till we come to wheat at about 3s. 9d. or 4s. a bushel. You cannot continue to pay in gold, and to prevent this.

It is in vain to strive; it is in vain to shuffle; it is in vain to pass Corn Bills, or to do any thing else: you cannot pay in gold, and have wheat more than sixpence or a shilling a bushel dearer in England than it is in France at the same time. I defy your Corn Bills: I defy any tricks that can be resorted to: if you have small notes, you have occasional *panic*, and the gold will be leaving the country occasionally. If you have not small notes, wheat must come down to four shillings the bushel, sometimes a little more and sometimes a little less. I do not care if there be a complete exclusion of foreign corn. The thing is this; this is the thing for you to discover; to unite gold payments with dear wheat. Do this, and you will be a jewel of a Minister; set your Irish and Scotch cabinet to work, all hands and double tides; find this out, and then your sway is as solid as the foundations of the earth; but unless you can make this discovery, you cannot carry on this concern for any length of time without yielding to the pressure in one way or another.

You are deceived, and the nation is deceived, by the notion, warranted, as you seem to suppose, by experience, that *things have come about before*; and that, therefore, they may come about again. You nurse yourself in the notion that, as the distress of 1822 was changed into prosperity, the distress of 1829, may become prosperity also. But as I have observed in two or three other places, the error arises here from making use of the *neuter*, instead of the *active verb*. Things did not *come about* after 1822, but were *put about* by an Act of Parliament; and you may now put them about again; but then you will, of course, expect another *panic*, as the consequence, with the addition of that Act being now an open and avowed national insolvency or bankruptcy, so clear as to leave a doubt in the mind of no human being.

Therefore, you cannot put things about without disgrace, without shame, without becoming the laughing-stock of the world, without becoming renowned for incomparable ignorance, and without, indeed, an open and flagrant abandonment of all the principles which you laid down so short a time ago, and which are recorded in all the reports of your

speeches. You cannot do this thing: this vile, low, huckstering deed without hiding yourself from the faces of the people; therefore, I take it for granted that the thought of doing it will never enter into your mind. Something else you must do, or plunge the country into confusion; but this thing, this act of meanness, and of mischief indescribable, I take it for granted that you cannot do.

To resort to a debasement of the currency, to a lowering of the value of the coin, as recommended by Mr. Atwood, would, in effect, be just the same thing as a re-issue of the paper; and notwithstanding Mr. Atwood's opinion to the contrary, that measure, if accompanied with a circulation of paper-money, would be no protection against a *panic*. Low as the value of the coin might be, it would still be of higher value than the paper. If the sovereign were no bigger than a pin's head, it would still be worth more than a one-pound note; and, though the fund-holder and tax-receiver might be bilked to any extent by this lowering of the coin, still the coin would be preferred to the paper, unless all the small paper were totally suppressed, and then the money would still be of too high value if it exceeded a fourth part of its present value.

There, therefore, remains nothing; no remedy, but the *equitable adjustment* prayed for in the Norfolk petition; and, it may be news to you to be informed that the people in the city of London, the fund-holders not excepted, are now talking of this adjustment. The fund-holders say, pretty generally, that they would gladly give up a part to have the rest *insured* to them. They must give up a pretty large part to have any assurance of the remainder; and even that assurance must entirely depend upon circumstances of war and peace. There is no way, therefore, of settling this matter safely but by an adjustment, and by the making of great sacrifices on the part of all those of every description who have claims on the national property, either in money, lands, or tithes.

I am convinced that the crisis is approaching for the adoption of this great measure; and I am also convinced that it is my duty, while it is certainly my inclination, to do every thing in my power to prepare the nation for this measure;

to make it familiar to their minds; to clear it of the misrepresentations and disfigurings by which it has been surrounded, and in which it has been garbed. To effect this purpose, I intend to make a little extraordinary exertion: we know not how soon it may be necessary to adopt the measure, and I know that I shall never grow younger and more capable of making such exertion. I have always perceived, that, when I could get into the same room with a company of farmers, I never failed to make them understand the cause of their troubles and distress. And I have frequently said that, if I could have one hour to talk to, and to be clearly understood by, all the merchants, traders, farmers, and landowners in England, the troubles of this country would soon be at an end. I have recently had an opportunity of perceiving that the merchants and traders of London are not more dull than their countrymen in general. I have had three occasions of addressing considerable numbers of them, those numbers increasing with the repetition of the occasion. Circumstances, not of consequence enough to mention here, rendered it inconvenient and entirely unfit for me to continue to address them from the same spot, a thing which I regretted exceedingly, but which was not to be avoided. Now if, following in this respect, the renowned PETER M'CULLOCH, I, instead of "*Ricardo Lectures*," give some lectures of my own! There will be this advantage attending this; that all the persons present, could receive the same impression at once; and would, as far as they adopted my opinions, communicate them to others in the course of a few hours, perhaps, after adopting them. Men like to hear, rather than to read: they hear all together: they aid one another, by their interchange of observations; and the whole process is quicker than that of the press, and beyond all measure more efficient.

When I talk of *lectures*, I mean *speeches*; for, as to writing down something, and then reading it, that would be wholly out of the question with me. I should like to have an opportunity of this sort of laying before the people of London my opinions upon the divers topics connected with the great interests of the country; and if I can make arrangements to suit me, I will set about the

thing in a short space of time. What, for instance, could be more useful than to send away a thousand or two of people, men deeply interested in the matter, convinced of the truth of the following:

1. That it is unjust to compel the nation to pay the interest of the debt, and the present salaries and pensions, and pay to their full present nominal amount.
2. That the measures relative to the currency have augmented the real amount of the taxes since 1813, threefold, at the least.
3. That it is the taxes that produce the distress, affected as they are by the measures relative to the currency.
4. That it is just and necessary, in this new and disjointed state of things, to apply part of the public property commonly called church property, to the liquidation of the debt, or to other public purposes.
5. That an *equitable adjustment* is practicable, and would produce consequences extremely advantageous to the country.
6. That there is no over-population in the country; and that want of employment arises from the want of money in the hands of farmers and traders and gentlemen, wherewith to pay labourers, and not from an overstock of labourers.

These I give merely as a specimen: important matters are always arising; and there would be this further advantage in the scheme, that it would give me time to do much more than I can do in any other way. The subject being announced a month beforehand, or at least, some time beforehand, the public would have to choose for themselves, and might attend or not, as they felt themselves interested in the subject. The lectures, or rather speeches, might be taken down by reporters from any of the newspapers, if any of the proprietors chose to send them; the object being to give a wider extent of circulation to my opinions, relative to these important matters, than that extent which I now have within my power.

This mode of proceeding will tend to make the nature of the struggle between me, and those who have opposed me, more conspicuous than it otherwise

would be. I have not the smallest desire to have the reputation of a speech-maker; a character or endowment which I have always held in very trifling estimation. I should not care if I were not capable of uttering two sentences at a time connectedly, if such uttering were of no use in the producing of conviction in others, or in conveying information to them. I despise, from the bottom of my heart, those who make speeches for the purpose of displaying what they call eloquence. In this respect I have not the smallest desire to acquire any reputation further than that of being able to convey plain sense to my hearers in a plain, unvarnished manner. I should deem myself worthy of the most decided and marked contempt if I were to attempt an undertaking of this sort without having just pretensions for so doing; and not only just pretensions, but pretensions unquestionable. I know that I do understand these subjects better than any body that I am acquainted with, or whose writings I have read: and I think it not presumption to offer myself as a teacher by word of mouth, any more than it is thus to offer myself in print.

Thus, then, my Lord Duke, we shall, in proportion to our means, be fairly pitted against each other. You have, on your side, all the political power and all the authorities of the country; you have ninety-nine hundredths of those who call themselves men of learning; you have all the possessors of place and emolument, and all the expectants: and I have with me nothing but my reputation for knowledge, and the hearty good will and strong partiality of a large portion of the well-informed men who do not live upon the taxes. Your means are so ample, your boundless press is so over-teeming, that nothing can mar you but the too great abundance of your resources. My resources are small, but they are compact: they lie in a small compass: they are under my control. It requires only industry and skill to wield them: the struggle will not now be long; and I will endeavour so to wield them as to secure for myself that triumph which twenty-six years of labours in this very cause so justly demand as a reward.

WM. COBBETT.

MALT TAX.

THE Meeting at the York Hotel, Bridge Street, Blackfriars, of which I spoke in the last Register, has been held; and I insert below, from *The Morning Chronicle*, a report of the proceedings, which concluded with seven resolutions, very sensible, and very well adapted for the purpose. All the speakers appear to have been gentlemen from the country; and we are to look upon the speeches as here given, as a mere sketch.

"The meeting was very respectably, but not numerously attended. Mr. Curteis, son of the Member for Sussex, took the chair, on the proposition of Mr. Ellis, which was unanimously agreed to by the company assembled. Mr. ELLIS then rose to move the resolutions which had been prepared for the purpose of being laid before the meeting. The great object, he observed, was to enable the labourer to supply himself at a cheap rate with the wholesome and substantial beverage of beer; which, owing to the heavy duty on malt, the poor could not at present procure. The consequence of the malt tax was, that although the population of the country had been doubled in the course of a century, there was scarcely as much beer consumed now as was consumed a century ago. He was convinced that the abolition of the malt tax would be attended with the greatest benefit, not only to the agricultural interests, but also to the manufacturing and commercial interests; and that, above all, it would be attended with the greatest advantage to the poor and the labouring class of the community. He then gave a strong picture of the injury done to the health, and even morals of the labourer, from the impossibility of his enjoying the wholesome beverage to which the English labourer had been in past times accustomed, and which, considering how remarkably well the soil and climate of England were adapted to the production of barley, might be considered the natural beverage of the country. He was also convinced that this very obnoxious tax

"might be abolished without much injury to the revenue, and without the necessity of having recourse to a property tax, which, in time of peace, he thought highly objectionable. If a deputation were to wait on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to propose and urge the repeal of this tax, he perhaps would admit that the tax was objectionable, but would contend that it was necessary that those who insisted on its repeal, should show either that there was a surplus revenue, or that a substitute might be found. He did not mean, at that time, to enter at length into the discussion of that subject; but he believed that he was prepared with a good answer to the objection. To be sure, the beer was taxed as well as the malt; and some might, perhaps, suppose that it would be of more advantage to the poorer classes to have the beer duty repealed than to have the malt duty abolished. But it had always been a point with him not to petition the Government for what he himself thought was unreasonable, and he was convinced that Ministers could not afford to abolish the duties both on malt and beer; but of the two he thought it was better to apply for the abolition of the duty on malt, because that would afford relief to all classes of the community. Mr. Ellis concluded by moving the first resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Bentley. The object of that, and of the other resolutions, was to show that in the opinion of the meeting the abolition of the malt duty was expedient, and specially called for by the actual situation of the labouring classes of the community.

"Mr. FOSTER expressed his concurrence in the object of the meeting; and stated that he was old enough to remember when the labourer brewed his own beer; and he was convinced that he would still do so, were it not for this very obnoxious tax. Its abolition would be attended with the most beneficial consequences to the labouring classes of the community, whether agricultural, manufacturing, or commercial.

"Mr. QUINTER observed, that the labouring classes were in the most serious distress at this moment, and

“ that it was the duty of the Government
 “ to relieve them if possible. The dis-
 “ tress had arisen to a pitch that could
 “ hardly be endured; and the best
 “ modes of relief would be to abolish
 “ the tax on malt, or the tax on beer, or
 “ to abolish both. The worthy gentle-
 “ man then stated his objections to the
 “ system of free trade, as it was called.
 “ It was said to be founded on the prin-
 “ ciple of reciprocity; but there was no
 “ reciprocity at all in the matter, con-
 “ sidering that this nation was loaded
 “ with a debt of 800 millions sterling.
 “ Under such a state of things the sys-
 “ tem was absurd, and made us be re-
 “ garded by other nations as simpletons
 “ in legislation. As for a substitute for
 “ the malt tax, they were not bound to
 “ find out one. It was for the Govern-
 “ ment to find out a substitute, or reduce
 “ its expenses. The Honourable Gen-
 “ tleman then proceeded to make some
 “ remarks on the last Corn Bill, but was
 “ called to order, the matter being con-
 “ sidered as irrelevant to the purposes
 “ of the meeting.

“ Mr. FIFE also argued strongly in
 “ favour of the abolition of the tax, and
 “ the importance of the repeal to the
 “ health and comforts of the labouring
 “ classes. Had it not been for this tax,
 “ the landlords and farmers would ap-
 “ ply much of their barley to the pro-
 “ duction of a most invigorating and
 “ healthy beverage for their labourers,
 “ which, as matters stood, they now
 “ threw to their hogs. It was the want
 “ of this healthy and old English beve-
 “ rage which exhausted the labourer,
 “ and rendered him reckless, which often
 “ drove him to poaching, and then to
 “ robbery. The taxes on malt and beer
 “ led to the demoralization of the coun-
 “ try, and ought to be got rid of as soon
 “ as possible; and instead of confining
 “ themselves to one of them, he con-
 “ ceived that it would be better to attack
 “ them both together. These duties
 “ were, with respect to the labouring
 “ classes, acts of oppression, and of such
 “ an oppression as the despot of Con-
 “ stantinople would not have ventured
 “ upon. It could only have been caused
 “ in such a country as this, where there
 “ was a partial freedom. Certainly, if
 “ the nation had been fully and proper-
 “ ly represented in Parliament, no such

“ oppressive enactments would have
 “ been tolerated.

“ Mr. HEALY stated, that he supplied
 “ his labourers, of whom he had a great
 “ many, with beer of the same quality
 “ as he used at his own table (hear,
 “ hear!); but he would be able to supply
 “ them in much more abundance if these
 “ obnoxious taxes were repealed, and
 “ he was certain that the effect would be
 “ that the labourers would do much
 “ more work with comfort to themselves.
 “ If horses were sent to the plough from
 “ the straw-yard, it would be in vain to
 “ expect that they would do as much
 “ work as if they had been fed on oats
 “ and beans; and so it would be vain to
 “ expect the same quantity of work from
 “ the labourer in his present compara-
 “ tively famished state, as might fairly
 “ be expected from him if he were well
 “ supplied with this invigorating and
 “ healthy beverage. Our Government
 “ was the best possible Government, but
 “ it was necessary to watch it closely
 “ with reference to its expenditure. An
 “ honest farmer, a neighbour of his, was
 “ accustomed to say, that the clergy-
 “ man of his parish was a very good
 “ clergyman, and that he gave very good
 “ sermons; but that the sermons were
 “ plaguy dear, for that one week with
 “ another they cost 19*l.* a piece. So he
 “ said of the Government. It was a very
 “ good Government, but it was a plaguy
 “ dear one; and it was the duty of every
 “ real friend to his country, to watch over
 “ the public expenditure, and to procure
 “ the abolition or reduction of such ob-
 “ noxious and oppressive taxes as those
 “ on malt and beer, if possible.

“ Mr. FORDHAM argued, that it was
 “ of more importance to the poor to have
 “ the tax on beer repealed than to pro-
 “ cure the abolition of that on malt; and
 “ he moved as an amendment, ‘that
 “ ‘the word *beer* be substituted for that
 “ ‘of *malt*.’ He afterwards withdrew
 “ that amendment, and proposed that
 “ the words ‘and beer,’ should be added
 “ to the word *malt*, so as to state it to be
 “ the opinion of the meeting that both
 “ taxes should be repealed.

“ Mr. ELLIS objected to both the
 “ amendments, and requested the meet-
 “ ing to confine themselves to the speci-
 “ fic point which they had been called
 “ upon to consider, which was merely

" the expediency of petitioning for the
 " abolition of the duty on malt. It had
 " always been his principle to wish only
 " for what was reasonable. It would be
 " highly desirable, no doubt, to have the
 " duty on beer abolished as well as that
 " on malt; but he did not believe that the
 " Government could afford to dispense
 " with both, and therefore he thought it
 " best to confine the resolution to the
 " repeal of that duty which he thought
 " on the whole to be most obnoxious.

" After some further discussion, how-
 " ever, the amendment was agreed to by
 " a majority of the meeting.

" The Reverend Doctor LAMB then
 " suggested another amendment, the
 " effect of which was to petition for the
 " total abolition of the duties on malt and
 " beer; or for a material reduction of
 " those duties. There was no doubt but
 " that if the total abolition could not be
 " procured, a material reduction would
 " be attended with the most beneficial
 " consequences. This amendment was
 " also adopted, and the several resolu-
 " tions were agreed to.

" Pursuant to one of the resolutions,
 " a Committee was appointed to carry
 " into effect the objects of the meeting,
 " and the names of the Chairman, Mr.
 " Ellis, Mr. Bentley, Mr. Healey, Mr.
 " Foster, &c. were mentioned, with pow-
 " er to add to their number.

" The Rev. Doctor LAMB then moved
 " the thanks of the meeting to the Chair-
 " man, and stated that it was highly satis-
 " factory to see persons of property com-
 " ing forward to promote objects of such
 " great public importance as the present;
 " and when they did come forward, it was
 " proper that their services should be
 " acknowledged.

" The motion was unanimously agreed
 " to.

" The CHAIRMAN, after returning
 " thanks, observed, that if the meeting
 " could accomplish its object, it would
 " be attended with immense benefit to
 " the poorer classes of the community.
 " He hoped that the sentiments uttered
 " at this meeting would find their way
 " to the ears, not only of his Majesty's
 " Ministers, but to those of the highest
 " personage in the community.

" The following are the resolutions
 " adopted by the meeting:—

" 1. That the present distressed state

" of the labouring poor imperiously calls
 " for the serious consideration of all
 " those who have the power to afford
 " them relief.

" 2. That a supply of wholesome
 " beer is essentially necessary to the
 " health and strength of the poor gene-
 " rally, but more particularly so to the
 " hard-working labourer, to whom it
 " may justly be called liquid food.

" 3. That the excessive tax on malt
 " and beer in a very great degree pre-
 " vents labourers, as well in husbandry
 " as in trades and manufactures, from
 " obtaining this nutriment, so necessary
 " for the support of their health and
 " strength, and compels them to drink
 " water, which, without supporting their
 " ability for labour, has, in many in-
 " stances, been followed by consequences
 " destructive of health.

" 4. That owing to the greatly in-
 " creased and excessively high duty on
 " malt, the annual average individual
 " consumption of that article, which was
 " for ten years, ending in 1723, forty-
 " one gallons and three quarts, has been
 " so much decreased, that for the last
 " ten years, ending in 1828, it has not
 " exceeded sixteen gallons and three
 " pints; and for the last year, only four-
 " teen gallons and two quarts, or about
 " two-fifths of the consumption of 1723.

" 5. That if the annual individual
 " consumption of the present population
 " was equal to what it was in 1723, it
 " would exceed 8,000,000 quarts, being
 " more than double its present amount.

" 6. That the above-mentioned consi-
 " derations induce this meeting to re-
 " commend either a total repeal or a
 " material reduction of all duties on
 " malt and beer.

" 7. That a committee be appointed
 " to promote the object of these resolu-
 " tions, who shall be empowered to adopt
 " such measures as shall appear to them
 " expedient, with power to add to their
 " numbers."

If these gentlemen proceed in the
 manner they have begun. If they fol-
 low up their blows, they will be joined
 by others; and they will get either a re-
 peel of the malt tax, or, which I suspect
 they would like better, a return to the
 small paper-money. Just as they did

in 1822! Not a word did they say about the means of paying the interest of the National Debt; not a word about how the Ministers would get the means to pay the army and the navy; they, as became them, left those high matters to wiser heads, and only wanted to take off the taxes on beer and malt, and thereby (for that was the only purpose they had in view) to afford the labouring people the means of having a comfortable cup of ale by their own fire-side. "*Solid men of Boston*," used to begin an old Yankee song; but never did solid men of Boston conduct any matter better than this was conducted. No saucy pretensions to understand matters of state; not a word on the intricate subject of small paper-money, the National Debt, and the establishments these countrymen, with that *naïveté* which belongs to their pursuits, as to finding out a substitute for the malt tax, as to all these matters, they were quite willing, as became good and loyal subjects, to leave them where the constitution had placed them; that is to say, in the hands of their Sovereign, his Ministers, and the Parliament, presuming, themselves, to have a knowledge, in this case, of nothing but the component parts of beer, and of its excellent qualities in cheering the heart, augmenting the capacity to labour, and preserving the morals of the labourer.

Strange to say, *The Morning Chronicle*, who, I thought, was a great stickler for the support of the revenue, highly approves, I am happy to say, of what took place at this meeting. I have derived so much pleasure from Dr. BLACK'S observations, that I cannot refrain from inserting them. I thought that the Doctor was of opinion that the more the Government got from the people, the better it was for the people themselves: I thought that the Doctor used to laugh at me when I kept up such a harping about this same malt tax. His words are these: "The country gentlemen of England have grossly neglected their duty hitherto, for they have cheered on the Government in all the mad schemes which have entailed such heavy burdens on us. But better late than never. We hail this attempt at a change of system, and hope that the meeting of Blackfriars will be speedily followed by meetings throughout all

"parts of the country. If the gentry have only the virtue to make a stand, the Administration must yield. They have nothing to do with details. All that they have to consider, is the abolition of taxes. The Government, when without the means, will devise in what branches economy can be most safely introduced. Every man who is at all acquainted with the domestic history of this country, knows that the tax on malt, and the hundred absurd regulations connected with it, have made it impossible for the labouring classes to have beer at home, and that they have been driven forcibly to the public-house. The change has been most unfortunate. The poor man, as is remarked by the Rev. Mr. TOWNSHEND, when he had beer at home, drank no more than was necessary, and his family enjoyed his presence of an evening; but when once in the public-house he was not always able to leave it when he ought to have done so. Demoralization treads closely on the heels of the tax. It happens, singularly enough, in this country, that almost all that in other countries is considered the essential expenditure of Government is provided for by the people themselves. The taxes in England are therefore far more superfluous than in any other country. Our insular situation renders our defence far more easy than the defence of other countries. How then happens it that we are so much more taxed than other countries?"

This last observation was, however, just about forty years ago, made by PAINE, who said that the Government in England was carried on by sheriffs, justices of the peace, headboroughs, constables, tithingmen, all of whom had a lord lieutenant at their head. So that each county was in itself, a complete government, bearing all its own expenses, paying for court-houses, entertaining judges, having jails, poor-houses, and every thing within itself. But the Doctor's observation is not less true because it was made nearly half a century ago. I admire the *naïveté* of the Doctor, too, who says that these country gentlemen have nothing to do with the details; by which, I presume, the Doctor means the consequences. They have nothing to do with the consequences of repealing the

malt and beer taxes: all that they have to do, says the Doctor (and I admire him for saying it), is the abolition of the taxes. He adds, and very wisely, that the Government, when without the means, will devise in what branches economy can most safely be introduced. I remember that CASTLEREAGH used to say, that it was better that the common people should drink tea than drink beer, because it made them more moral. My friend, the Doctor, on the contrary, says that *demoralization* treads closely on the heels of the tax. This is a nasty, stupid, French word; but, I forgive the word for the sake of the sentiment. Now, then, if these solid men will but proceed steadily, and take a Bible oath never, in any of their meetings, to talk about small paper-money, corn bills, national faith, army and navy, pensioners and placemen, or any thing in the world but the excellent qualities of beer, and of its excellent effect, physical and moral, or, in other words, bodily and mental, or, as I heard a great orator lately say on the physical powers, "Whether *mental* or corporeal;" if they will but confine themselves to this one topic; or, if they do choose to talk about *national faith*, will but abuse all those who would not uphold it; if they will but act thus, they will do more in one month than ten thousand petitions, depicting the ruin which has arisen from the enforcement of the Small-note Bill. They may make themselves easy on the score of corn bills: no foreign corn will come into England if they get the malt tax repealed; and get it repealed they will if they persevere; or, which I am afraid, as I said before, they really want, they will get a repeal of the Small-note Bill.

COUNTY MEETINGS will follow upon the heels of this London meeting, I dare say; and the Duke of Wellington, notwithstanding his former opinion upon the subject, will very soon find that these are not "*a farce*." If these land people, who move like tortoises, keep steadily on, and let the subject become more and more important as it proceeds; and, as lawyers call it, never travel out of the record, they will have the whole of the people with them: those who ask how the debt is to be paid, and the establishments kept up, will be scouted, and will

receive for answer, that they may be all kept up, and all discharged duly and fully, the better for the people having good beer. In short, to repeal the malt tax would be a blessed revolution: not a glorious revolution, but a blessed one: I have harped upon the subject for more than twenty years: I have repeatedly said, that I could ask for *nothing* more than a repeal of the malt tax. Those who ask for a repeal of the beer tax, as these gentlemen have resolved to do, on the motion of Mr. FORDHAM, do not perceive, that a repeal of the malt tax would, in fact, be a repeal of the beer tax; for that must be a mad fellow, indeed, who would go to buy *taxed* beer when he could get *free* malt. Some of these gentlemen seem anxious to keep the labourers from the public-house: let the beer tax remain, then, and take off the tax on malt. Some of the brewers, about twenty years ago, plied the Ministry very hard, and they had plied PITT before, to take the tax off the beer altogether, and put it upon the malt. But neither PITT nor any of his successors could prevail upon the squires and lords to do that, which would have been cutting their own throats with a vengeance. If that had been done, a quart of home-brewed beer would have been as difficult to find as the nest of a woodcock.

Upon the whole, my readers will congratulate themselves at seeing my twenty years of recommendations at last begun to be acted upon. Once more, before I dismiss the subject, let me beseech those country gentlemen to abstain from every thing in these discussions except eulogies on good beer, which cannot well be too long or too strong, and to the necessity of giving the labourer a belly-full of it in his own house; by adhering to which advice, they will ensure the support of the whole country.

SHAKSPEARE HOAX.

I HAVE, at various times and in sundry parts of my voluminous writings, expressed my contempt of those, who, by enthusiastic men, or knavish traders in plays and pamphlets, have been induced to look upon the plays of this old author as *something almost divine*. The words "*immortal bard*," applied to this man,

have always appeared to me such a monstrous perversion of terms, such an insult to my understanding, that I have many times expressed my contempt of the persons making use of the appellation as thus applied. But what I have been most anxious about is, to prevent, as far as in me lay, *youth* from being corrupted in their taste by the fashion of praising, of almost adoring, the writings of this poet; and in my "ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN," No. IV., which was published on the 1st of September, 1, in order to warn them against being misled by *fashion*, as to *books*, related to them the following account of the SHAKSPEARE HOAX.

But, that which never ought to have been forgotten by those who were men at the time, and that which ought to be *made known to every young man of the present day*, in order that he may be induced to exercise his own judgment with regard to books, is, the transactions relative to the writings of SHAKSPEARE, which transactions took place about thirty years ago. It is still, and it was then much more, the practice to extol every line of SHAKSPEARE to the skies: not to admire SHAKSPEARE has been deemed to be a proof of want of understanding and taste. Mr. GARRICK, and some others after him, had their own good and profitable reasons for crying up the works of this poet. When I was a very little boy, there was a *jubilee* in honour of SHAKSPEARE; and as he was said to have planted a *Mulberry tree*, boxes, and other little ornamental things in wood, were sold all over the country, as having been made out of the trunk or limbs of this ancient and sacred tree. We Protestants laugh at the *relics* so highly prized by Catholics; but never was a Catholic people half so much duped by the relics of saints, as this nation was by the mulberry tree, of which, probably, more wood was sold than would have been sufficient in quantity to build a ship of war, or a large house. This madness abated for some years; but towards the end of the last century it broke out again with more fury than ever. SHAKSPEARE's works were published by BOYDELL, an Alderman of London, at a subscription of *five hundred pounds for each copy*, accompanied by plates, each forming a large picture. Amongst the mad men of the day was a Mr. IRELAND, who seemed to be more mad than any of the rest. His adoration of the poet led him to perform a pilgrimage to an old farm-house, near Stratford-upon-Avon, said to have been the birth-place of the poet. Arrived at the spot, he requested the farmer and his wife to let him search the house for papers, *first going upon his knees*, and praying, in the poetic style, the gods to aid him in his quest. He found no papers; but he found that the farmer's wife, in clearing out a garret some years before, had found some rubbishy old papers which she had *burnt*,

and which had probably been papers used in the wrapping up of pigs' cheeks, to keep them from the bats. "O, wretched woman!" exclaimed he; "do you know what you have done?" "O dear, no!" said the woman, half frightened out of her wits: "no harm, I hope; for the papers were *very old*; I dare say as old as the house itself." This threw him into an additional degree of *excitement*, as it is now fashionably called: he raved, he stamped, he foamed, and at last quitted the house, covering the poor woman with every term of reproach; and hastening back to Stratford, took post-chaise for London, to relate to his brother madmen the horrible sacrilege of this heathenish woman. Unfortunately for Mr. IRELAND, unfortunately for his learned brothers in the metropolis, and unfortunately for the reputation of SHAKSPEARE, Mr. IRELAND took with him to the scene of his adoration a son, about *sixteen years of age*, who was articled to an attorney in London. The son was by no means so sharply bitten as the father; and, upon returning to town, he conceived the idea of *supplying the place of the invaluable papers*, which the farm-house heathen had destroyed. He thought, and he thought rightly, that he should have little difficulty in writing plays *just like those of Shakspeare*! To get *paper* that should seem to have been used in the reign of QUEEN ELIZABETH, and *ink* that should give to writing the appearance of having the same age, was somewhat difficult; but both were overcome. Young IRELAND was acquainted with a son of a bookseller, who dealt in *old books*: the blank leaves of these books supplied the young author with paper; and he found out the way of making proper ink for his purpose. To work he went, *wrote several plays, some love-letters, and other things*; and having got a Bible, extant in the time of SHAKSPEARE, he wrote *notes* in the margin. All these, together with *sonnets* in abundance, and other little detached pieces, he produced to his father, telling him he got them from a gentleman, who had *made him swear that he would not divulge his name*. The father announced the invaluable discovery to the literary world: the literary world rushed to him; the manuscripts were regarded as genuine by the most grave and learned Doctors, some of whom (and amongst these were DOCTORS PARR and WARTON) gave, *under their hands*, an opinion, that the manuscripts *must have been written by SHAKSPEARE*; for that *no other man in the world could have been capable of writing them*!

Mr. IRELAND opened a subscription, published these new and invaluable manuscripts at an enormous price; and preparations were instantly made for *performing one of the plays*, called VORTIGERN. Soon after the acting of the play, the indiscretion of the lad caused the secret to explode; and, instantly, those who had declared that he had written as well as SHAKSPEARE, did every thing in their power to *destroy him*! The attorney drove him from his office; the father drove him from his house; and, in short, he was hunted down as if he had been

a malefactor of the worst description. The truth of this relation is undeniable; it is recorded in numberless books. The young man is, I believe, yet alive; and, in short, no man will question any one of the acts.

After this, where is the person of sense who will be guided in these matters by *fashion*? where is the man, who wishes not to be deluded, who will not, when he has read a book, *judge for himself*? After all these jubilees and pilgrimages; after BOYDELL's subscription of 500*l.* for one single copy; after it had been deemed almost impiety to doubt of the genius of SHAKSPEARE surpassing that of all the rest of mankind; after he had been called the "*Immortal Bard*," as a matter of course, as we speak of MOSES and AARON, there having been but one of each in the world; after all this, comes a lad of sixteen years of age, writes that which learned Doctors declare could have been written by no man but SHAKSPEARE, and, when it is discovered that this laughing boy is the real author, the DOCTORS turn round upon him, with all the newspapers, magazines, and reviews, and, of course, the public at their back, revile him as an *impostor*; and, under that odious name, hunt him out of society, and doom him to starve! This lesson, at any rate, he has given us: not to rely on the judgment of Doctors and other pretenders to literary superiority. Every young man, when he takes up a book for the first time, ought to remember this story; and, if he do remember it, he will disregard fashion with regard to the book, and will pay little attention to the decision of those who call themselves critics.

The reader will see, that I was not *sure*, that ill-used, this oppressed, this cruelly treated gentleman, was *still alive*. That he *is alive*, however, the following letter from him will show. I publish it with great pleasure, not only as a confirmation of the truth of my own statement, but in *justice to him*.

"London, October 5th, 1829.

"SIR,—Permit me to offer my grateful acknowledgments for the very handsome manner in which you have been pleased to notice my fabrication of the Shaksperian MSS., in the 4th Number of your work, entitled, *Advice to Young Men*. I am the more particularly urged to remit the present, as in your production above referred to, you have handled the subject of my spurious papers, in a manner altogether unlike the style adopted by the generality of those *very liberal and* ENLIGHTENED CRITICS and WRITERS, who have descanted upon the same topic.

"Respecting your statements they

"are correct throughout, with the exception of an *annotated Bible* being produced, as the volume in question did not form a feature among the documents delivered to my father. However, Sir, in regard to the unrelenting persecution and virulence displayed towards me, as mentioned by you, it would be impossible, even for your *energetic pen*, to descant at sufficient length upon that head. The intention was, not only to vilify and hunt me from society, but goad my lacerated mind till I should be led to commit the act of *self-destruction*; so that my tongue being mute for ever, efforts might have been set on foot to prove, that the infamous suicide, young Ireland, had not been the writer of the papers, but a mere vehicle for producing to the world the fabrications of VETERAN HEADS, thereby lightening the onus of shame from themselves, in having been the dupes of a MERE BOY. You state, and with strict justice, that while my writings were esteemed to be the effusions of Shakspeare; *sublimity and poetic fire* were ascribed to them; but no sooner was the hue and cry raised, than *sublimity* was construed into *methodistical rant*, *pathos* became the *whining of a school girl*, and *poetic fire* dwindled into *unmeaning rant*. This is not mere assertion, since men who committed themselves not only to state but even *write and publish their unqualified encomiums*, went so far as to *write and publish point-blank denials of their previous attestations*; as however facts are stubborn things, I will proceed to illustrate my assertion in the person of one BOADEN. This man, at the period when the Shaksperian papers were issued, was editor of the Oracle newspaper; the columns of which abounded daily with sounding panegyrics as to the style, &c. of my writings, and his thorough conviction of their originality; on a sudden, however, that writer having discovered he had been wandering in the dark with his eyes wide open, thought fit to shift his ground and give the direct lie to his previous opinions. This Boaden, at the period in question, produced a drama, entitled '*Fontainville Forest*;' since which he has made himself known to the literary world as author

“ of a miserable volume on the subject
 “ of portraits of Shakspeare, that may
 “ be regarded as originals. The latter
 “ work has been followed by two bulky
 “ volumes, entitled, ‘ *The Life of the*
 “ *late John Philip Kemble, Esq.* ; after
 “ which came forth two equally ponderous
 “ tomes, recording *The Memoirs of Mrs. Siddons* ; a brace of
 “ lucubrations, which, on the score of
 “ dulness and fulsome eulogy, may well
 “ cry, *par nobile fratrum* ; since never
 “ fell four volumes deadlier weights
 “ from the English press. Yet such
 “ is a sample of one of the fulminating
 “ instruments employed to hunt down a
 “ boy then destitute and friendless. It
 “ may not however be irrelevant to remark,
 “ in reference to the *trashy* piece
 “ entitled *Fontainville Forest*, which appeared
 “ some 28 years back ; that this very
 “ *INGENUOUS* writer and critic, significantly
 “ remarked to a friend, who complimented
 “ him on the theatrical effort in question, ‘ *That he* (Boaden)
 “ *believed he had given Billy* (meaning
 “ *Shakspeare*) *the go by*’ ! The above
 “ person was one, among the many,
 “ who conceived that my *literary forgeries*
 “ more deservedly entailed upon me the
 “ gallows than if I had fabricated a ream
 “ of bank paper ; while to crown this
 “ picture of dotard folly and self-sufficiency,
 “ about five years back, speaking to me
 “ concerning my Shaksperian hoax,
 “ Boaden remarked with the greatest possible
 “ solemnity : ‘ *You must be aware, Mr. Ireland,*
 “ *that it was little short of sacrilege ; indeed,*
 “ *Sir, it was as bad as taking the holy*
 “ *chalice from the altar, and —*
 “ *therein.*’ Finally, it was in vain that
 “ I wrote contrite letters to Mr. Chalmers
 “ and various others, amongst the most
 “ prominent believers, entreating their
 “ pardon, and that my conduct might
 “ be regarded as the act of a boy ; without
 “ any premeditation or evil design at
 “ heart ; in no one solitary instance
 “ were my applications even noticed ; so
 “ implacable, and fiend-like, I may say,
 “ was the conduct manifested towards me.
 “ I will now only further intrude upon
 “ your time to remark, in support of your
 “ assertion, where you say, ‘ *Every young man when he*
 “ *reads should judge for himself*’, that on
 “ producing MSS. which I had

“ penned only twelve hours before, I
 “ have heard the learned and the antiquarian
 “ adduce, as proofs of their undoubted
 “ authenticity, circumstances (being myself
 “ aware of facts) which I knew ought to
 “ have acted as the most cogent reasons
 “ for their not being accredited ; nevertheless,
 “ those very men were the grand arbiters
 “ to establish documents as upwards of two
 “ centuries old ; which, as before observed,
 “ had only emanated from my pen twelve
 “ hours previous.

“ Should you feel inclined, Sir, to give
 “ publicity to the present, in confirmation
 “ of the arguments already adduced in your
 “ entertaining Number, you are at perfect
 “ liberty so to do ; and with every apology
 “ for this long intrusion on your forbearance,
 “ I beg to subscribe myself,

“ Sir,

“ Your grateful and obliged

“ Servant,

“ J. H. IRELAND.”

I never saw Mr. IRELAND but once,
 and that was more than twenty-nine
 years ago ; but, I have always remembered
 his at-once-ludicrous and melancholy
 story. No doubt that many of the
 “ *believers*” were really learned men,
 and Doctors Parr and Wharton were
 unquestionably such. They themselves
 had been, in this respect, misled by
 fashion ; they were naturally ashamed
 at the exposure of the folly into which
 habitual enthusiasm had led them ; but,
 their justice ought to have forbidden them
 to act cruelly towards this boy, whose
 only crime was having undeceived them,
 having convinced them that they had
 had their taste and judgment corrupted
 by fashion. Then the talents of the
 boy ought to have had weight with them
 too. But, every feeling of justice and
 mercy was overcome by that of wounded
 literary pride. Their conduct in this
 case was very much a-kin to that of a
 girl who destroys the fruit of her illicit
 amours. It is curious that I never saw
 a copy of these famous *Shaksperian*
remains. I wish some one would lend
 me the book for a day or two. If left
 at No. 183, Fleet Street, it shall be
 returned in a few days, and handled with
 great care.

COBBETT'S CORN.

A LETTER from Mr. J. CRISP, of Bath, giving me an account of the corn crops of several gentlemen in that neighbourhood, shall be inserted next week, if I can possibly find room. It is full of useful matter. The corn seems to be more forward near Bath than in many other parts. But, in fact, *my own corn is nearly hard now*. I shall let it hang on the stalk, however, *till the husks are WHITE*; and I advise others to do the same, picking up and bringing in, from time to time, such ears as accident may have broken off, or of such plants as may have been, by wind or any thing else, knocked down. As to the SALE of the CORN for seed this year, I intend to sell it in acre-bags, half-acre bags, quarter-acre bags, in bunches of five ears, and in single ears, as I did last year; and all at a lower price than I sold them at last year. After one more crop, the seed will be cheap enough; not more than about two shillings and sixpence to plant an acre; and the next year after that, any neighbour will give another corn to plant an acre or two. The seed will, in fact, *cost nothing*. People will begin to *select fine ears for seed*; and the plant and produce will be *greatly improved* in a short time. The price for *shelled corn* will be half way between that of wheat and that of barley; and the *average crop* will be about seventy bushels to the acre. In numerous cases, it will be a *second crop*; for, with transplanting (which is so easily done) it may follow *tares, podded peas, early cabbages*, and even *turnip and rape seed*. It may follow *rye or winter-barley* cut green for cattle. In a few years it will put an end to the importation of corn and flour for ever. Since writing the foregoing, I have received four ears of corn from Mr. EVAN REES, of CARMARTHEN. *quite ripe*; and one that came from Mr. BERNARD, of Harlow in Essex, which is not only quite ripe, but amongst the finest ears of the sort that I ever saw. Fine crops, I hear of at YALDING and at MAIDEN in Kent, and also at CROSSEY, near Norwich, in which one parish there are 11 or 12 persons who have planted some of the corn; and one of whom expects to have a bushel

from each rod of ground. My correspondent, Mr. Reeve, of that village, tells me, that he has *made beer with the stalks of the tops*, I shall try this tomorrow; and my readers shall know the result very soon. Sometime ago I was told, that *sugar* had been extracted from the stalks.

Just published, No. V. of

COBBETT'S ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN, and incidentally to YOUNG WOMEN. I have begun with the YOUTH, and shall go to the YOUNG MAN or the BACHELOR, talk the matter over with him as a LOVER, then consider him in the character of HUSBAND; then as FATHER; then as CITIZEN or SUBJECT.

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